

# Pilot Test of Nutrient Removal by Large-Scale Drip Dispersal of Tertiary-Treated Effluent, Southern Vermont

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Waite-Heindel  
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Burlington, VT**

**2020 NEWEA  
Annual Conference  
Boston, MA; Jan. 27, 2020**



- **Proposed Residential  
and Commercial Development  
at Bromley Ski Area, Peru, VT**

- **Proposed Development at Bromley Ski Area;**
  - **Soil-based Wastewater Disposal  
of 80,000 gpd**

**Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal  
by Drip Dispersal**

- **Proposed Development at Bromley Ski Area;**
  - **Soil-based Wastewater Disposal, 80,000 gpd;**
- **Impacts on In-stream Nutrients are limited  
by VT regulations;**

**Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal  
by Drip Dispersal**

- **Proposed Development at Bromley Ski Area;**
  - **Soil-based Wastewater Disposal, 80,000 gpd;**
  - **Impacts on In-stream Nutrients are limited  
by VT regulations;**
- **Tertiary Treatment.**

## **DESIGN PARAMETERS:**

- **Wastewater Disposal Volume:** about 80,000 gpd;
  - **Wastewater Treatment:** Tertiary;
  - **Treated Wastewater Disposal Method:**  
Soil-based disposal.

➤ **These design parameters trigger Vermont's Indirect Discharge Regulations, which require field verification of nutrient removal by soils at disposal area.**

**PURPOSE OF PILOT STUDY: To PROVIDE**  
**ONE PARAMETER in MASS-BALANCE CALCULATION**  
**of PREDICTED NUTRIENT IMPACT**  
**on RECEIVING STREAM:**

**§14-912 Determining Compliance With Aquatic Permitting Criteria**

- (a) To determine compliance with the Aquatic Permitting Criteria, a mass balance equation shall be used. The resulting in-stream concentration calculated with the mass balance equation must be less than or equal to the Aquatic Permitting Criterion for each parameter to demonstrate compliance. The following mass balance equation shall be used for calculating the resulting in-stream concentration:

$$\frac{[(E_c) \times (E_q) + (D_c) \times (D_q)]}{(E_q + D_q)} = \text{Resulting in-stream concentration}$$

Where:  $E_c$  = Existing in-stream receiving water concentration

$E_q$  = Appropriate stream flow at point of compliance and  
for annual or seasonal release rate.

$D_c$  = In-ground effluent concentration (5% exc), based on site specific testing.

$D_q$  = Proposed discharge flow (i.e. maximum design capacity) .

**From VT Indirect Discharge Rules  
[WW Disposal > 6,500 gpd]**

## PARAMETER in MASS-BALANCE CALCULATION:

**“IN-GROUND EFFLUENT CONCENTRATION”**  
**[Groundwater Concentration beneath Disposal Area],**  
**based on site-specific testing**

### §14-912 Determining Compliance With Aquatic Permitting Criteria

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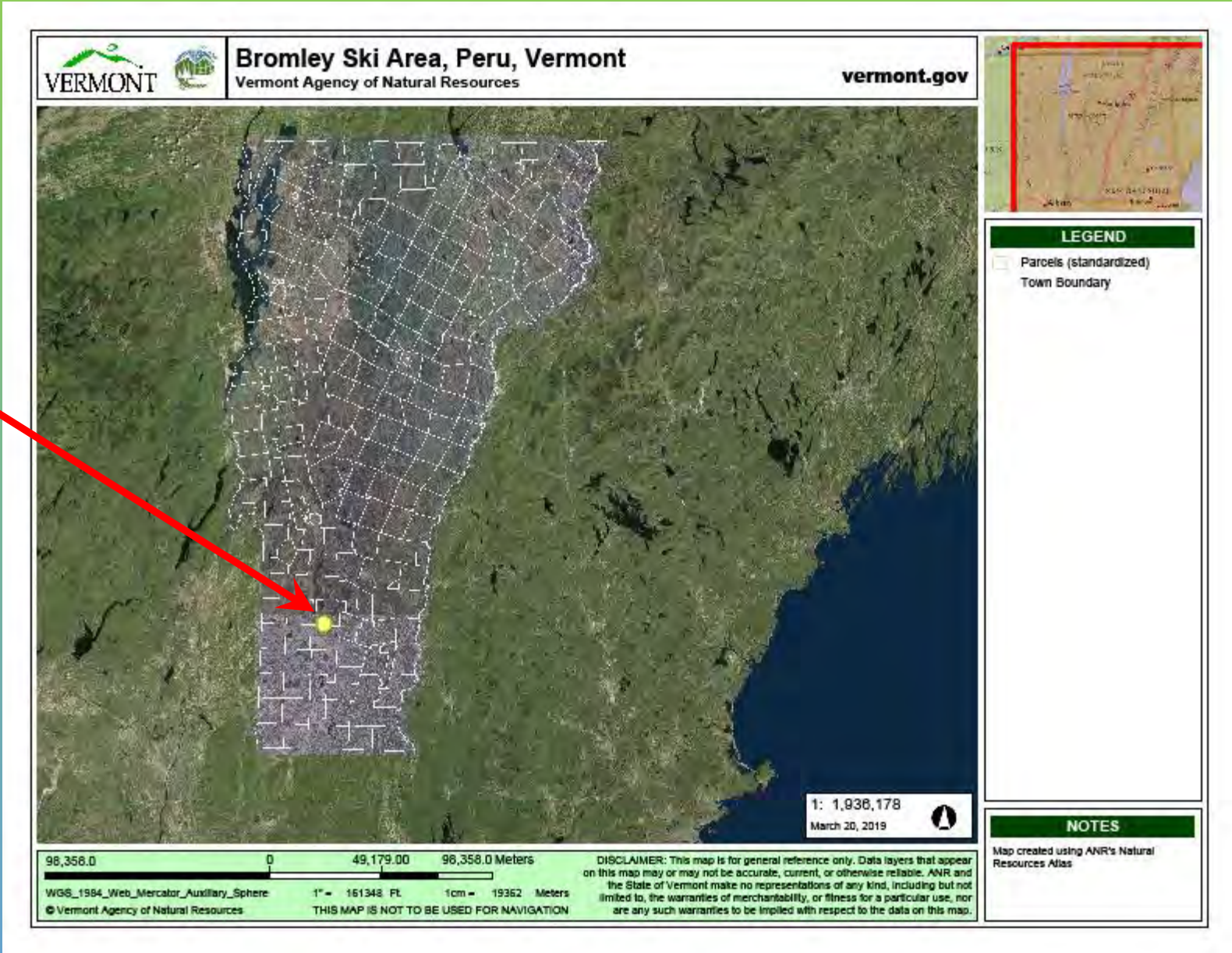
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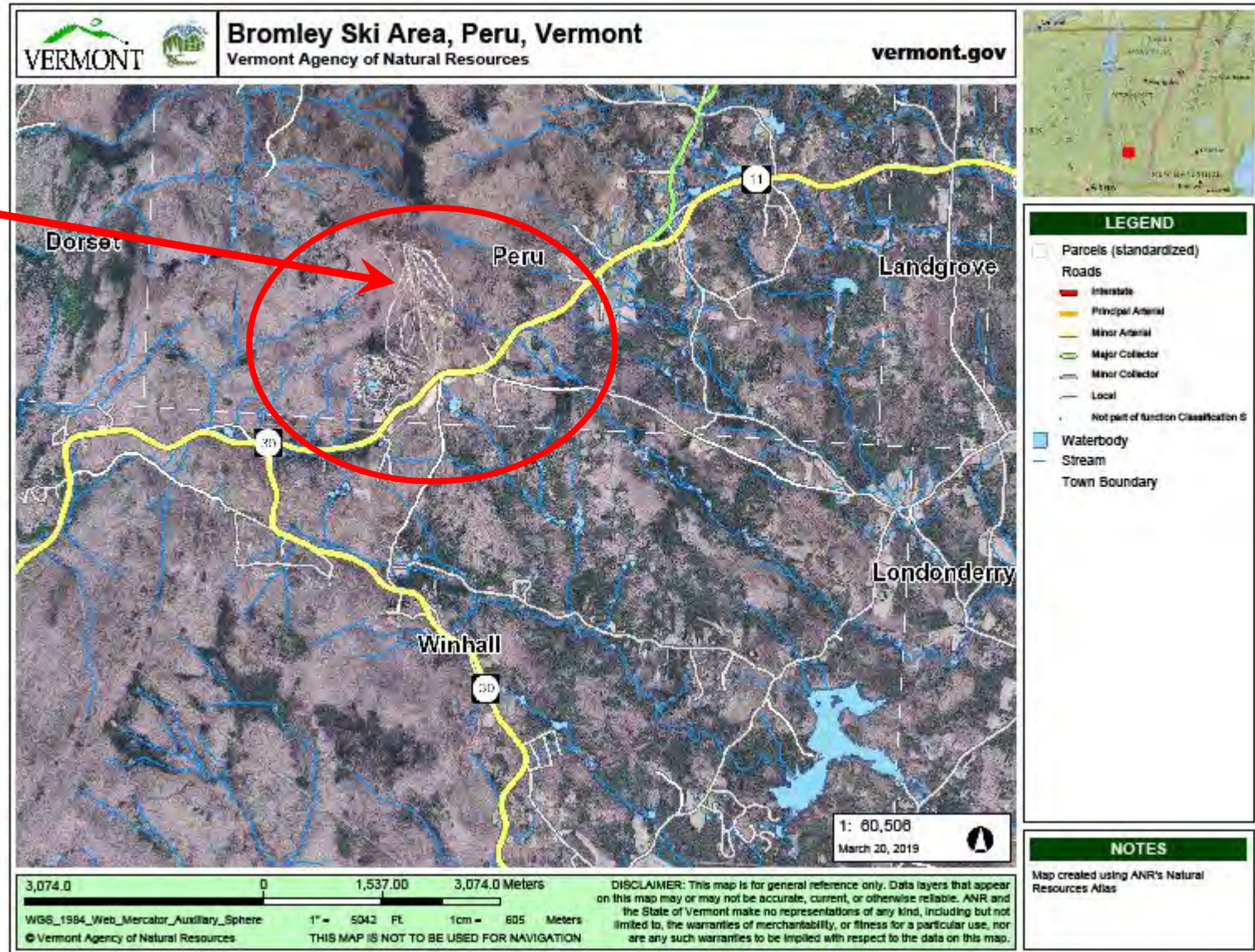
# Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal by Drip Dispersal

**Bromley  
Ski Area,  
Peru, VT**

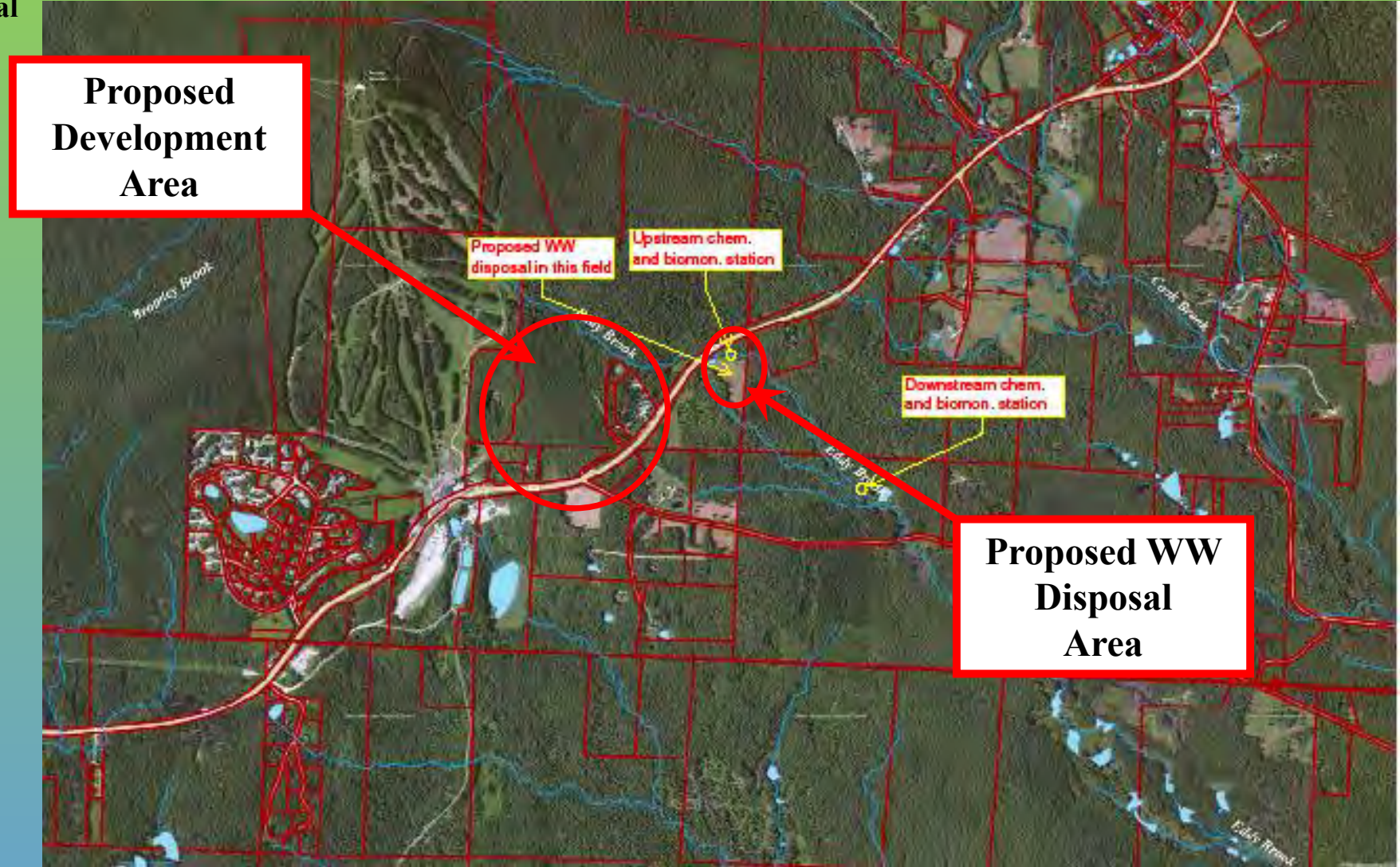


# Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal by Drip Dispersal

**Bromley Ski Area, Peru, VT**



**Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal  
by Drip Dispersal**



# Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal by Drip Dispersal

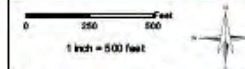
**Proposed WW  
Disposal  
Area**



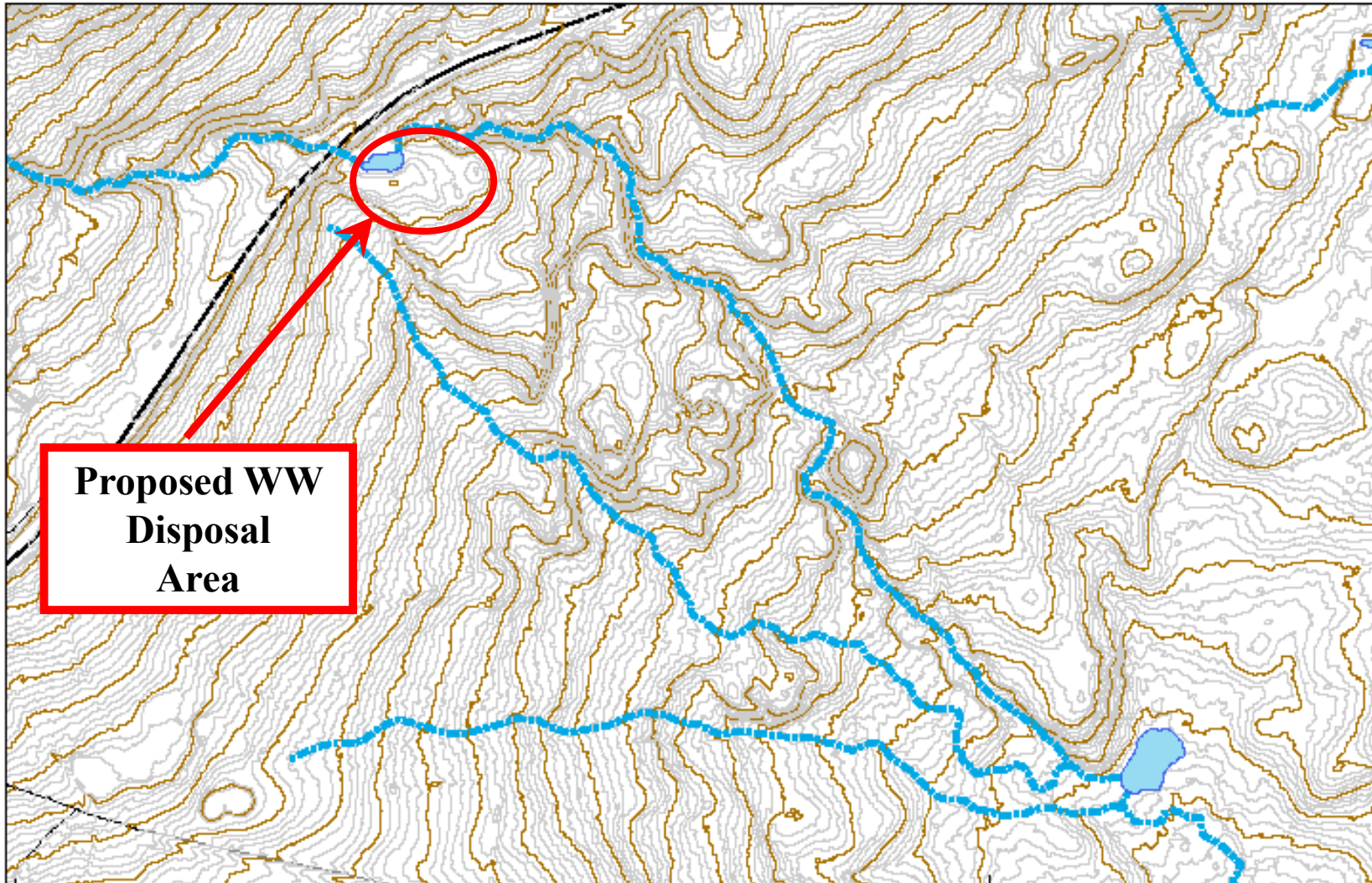
Pink lines = Parcel boundaries  
[Approx.; from VCGI]  
  
Red stars = Water Supplies, Field-Located by WHEM  
[unless otherwise noted]

© 10/2007  
Map produced by C. Heindel  
[Bromley Best Farm, WHEM Maps, NeighWS-0004a14]

**Bromley Best Farm  
Wastewater Disposal Area:  
No Water Supplies within 1,000 ft.**



**Waite - Heindel**  
Environmental Management  
WHEM  
Waite - Heindel  
Environmental Management  
1111  
1111

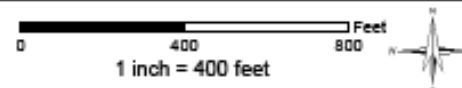


**Proposed WW  
Disposal  
Area**

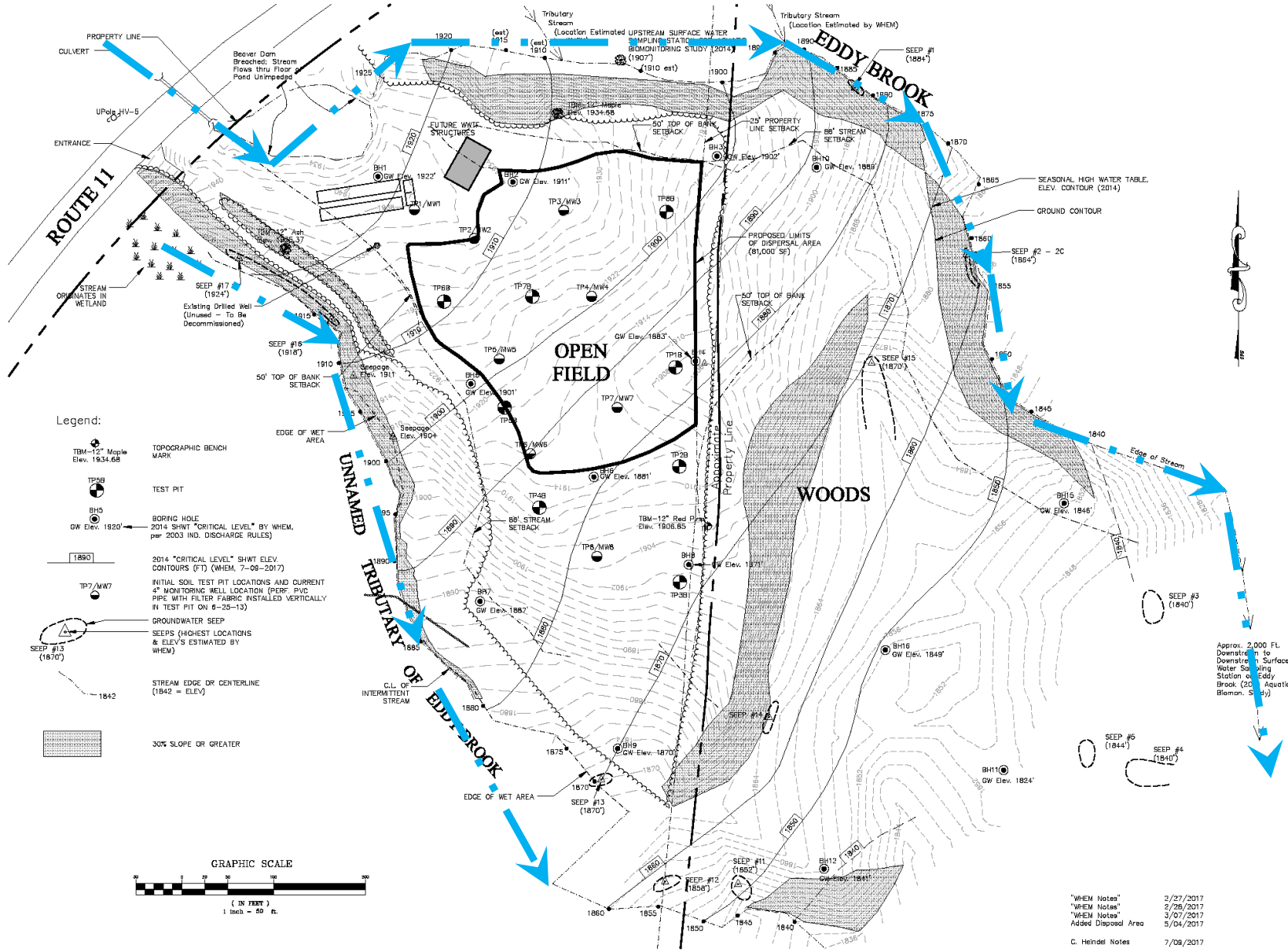
Dashed Blue - "Stream", from VCGI Hydrology database.

Topography: 2-ft. Contour Interval LIDAR, from VCGI

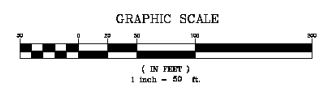
**Proposed Wastewater Disposal Area;  
Bromley Best Farm**



March 7, 2017  
Map produced by: C. Heindel  
BROMLEYBest Farm WWArea\WH\EM Maps\Unlited.mxd



- Legend:**
- TOPOGRAPHIC BENCH MARK
  - TEST PIT
  - BORING HOLE
  - 2014 SHWT "CRITICAL LEVEL" BY WHEM, per 2003 IND. DISCHARGE RULES
  - 2014 "CRITICAL LEVEL" SHWT ELEV. CONTOURS (FT) (WHEM, 7-09-2017)
  - INITIAL SOIL TEST PIT LOCATIONS AND CURRENT 4" MONITORING WELL LOCATION (PREF. PVC PIPE WITH FILTER FABRIC INSTALLED VERTICALLY IN TEST PIT ON 6-25-13)
  - GROUNDWATER SEEP
  - SEEPS (HIGHEST LOCATIONS & ELEV'S ESTIMATED BY WHEM)
  - STREAM EDGE OR CENTERLINE (1842 = ELEV)
  - 30% SLOPE OR GREATER



"WHEM Notes" 3/27/2017  
 "WHEM Notes" 2/28/2017  
 "WHEM Notes" 3/07/2017  
 Added Disposal Area 5/04/2017  
 C. Heindel Notes 7/08/2017

FULL BUILD-OUT DISPOSAL AREA PLAN		REVISIONS	
DESIGNED BY: LUV/CMB	DATE: 2-28-17	NO.	DESCRIPTION
CHECKED BY: VPC	DATE: 03/01/17	1	ADDED DISPOSAL AREA LIMIT
DATE: 03/01/17	SCALE: 1" = 50'	2	DESCRIPTION

GUNTLOW & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
 2800888 - BURLINGTON - ARCHITECTS

41 WILKINSON STREET  
 WILKINSON, VT, 05391  
 413-884-8141  
 413-496-0712 FAX

**Proposed Wastewater Disposal Area - Best Farm**

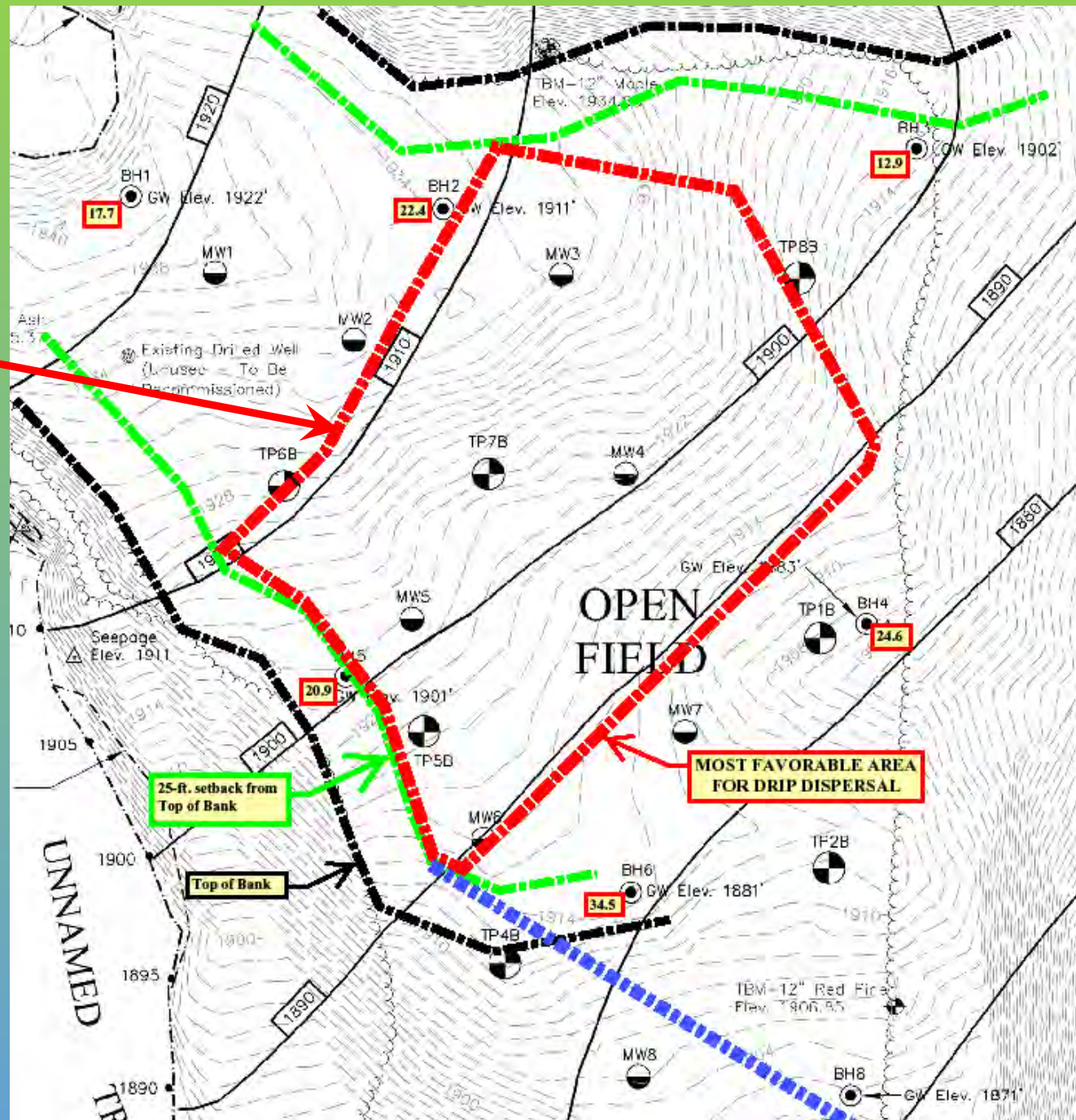
PREPARED FOR  
**Bromley Ski Area**  
 Rt. 11 Peru, VT

**C2**

WH WAITE HEINDEL  
 Environmental Management

**Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal  
by Drip Dispersal**

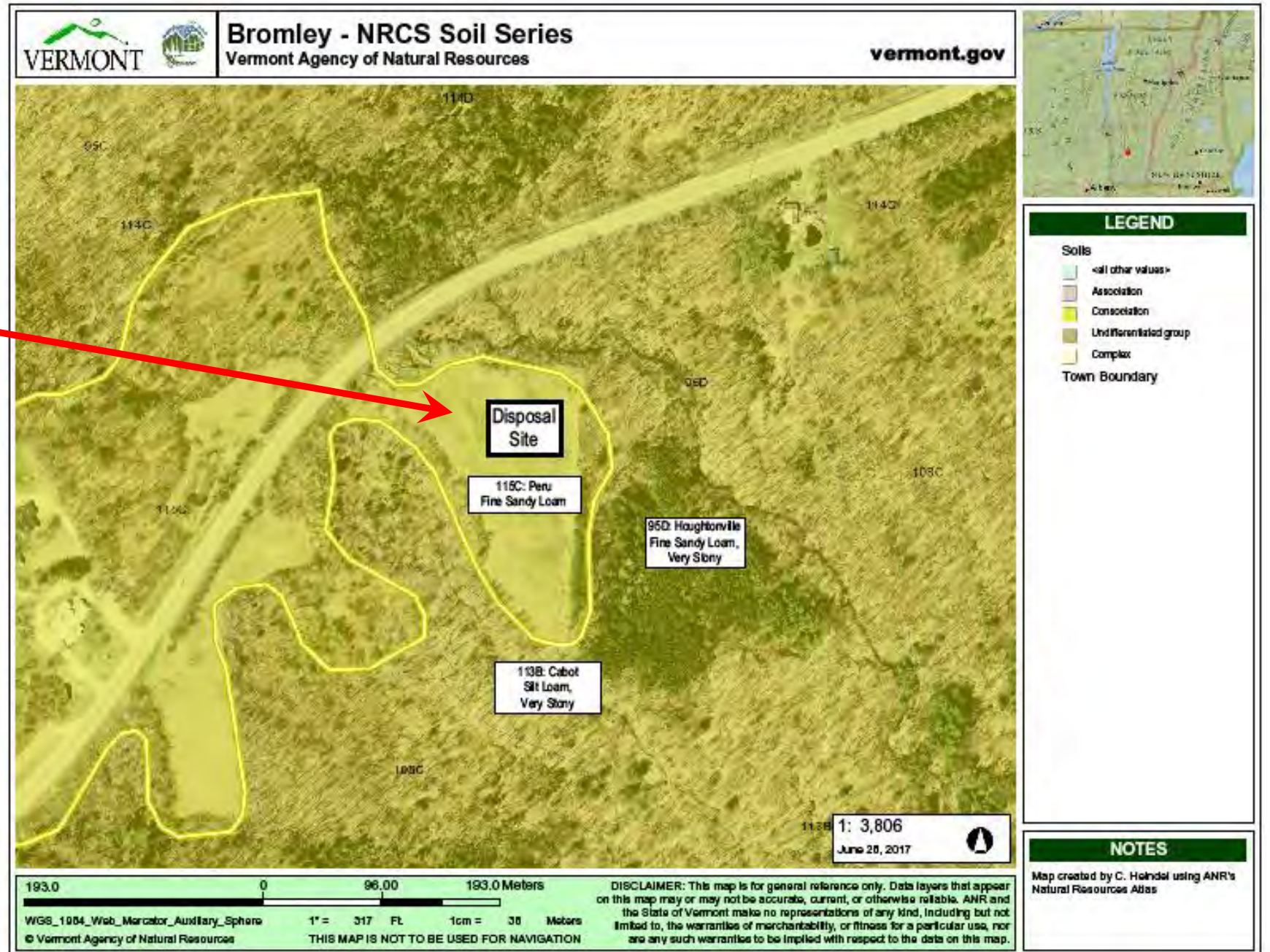
**Favorable Area for  
Drip Dispersal:  
50,000 to 60,000 sq.ft.**



# Pilot Test, Nutrient Removal by Drip Dispersal

**NRCS Soil Series:  
Peru  
Fine Sandy Loam**

**[parent material =  
loamy lodgement till]**





**ON-SITE SOILS:**

**Sandy Loam,  
over  
15 to 25 feet of  
Unsaturated  
Sands & Gravels**

**[glacio-fluvial deposit]**



## PILOT TEST PURPOSE:

**Provide groundwater concentrations  
of nutrients NO<sub>3</sub> and TDP  
down-gradient of disposal area  
[“in-ground effluent concentrations”]**

**for use in Mass-Balance Prediction  
of Nutrient Impacts on Receiving Stream**

## PILOT TEST DETAILS:

- Drip dispersal field: 235 ft. x 11 ft., 4 dispersal pipes;  
application area: 2,515 sq.ft.

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- Drip dispersal field: 235 ft. x 11 ft., 4 dispersal pipes;  
application area: 2,515 sq.ft.
- Test Effluent: Start with wastewater effluent from Bromley WWTP  
(secondary treatment);
  - To roughly mimic Tertiary Treatment, dilute it  
with well water by approximately 1:4;
- To track the progress of pilot test, spike it with Bromide as tracer  
[Pool-grade Sodium Bromide, 2 oz. / 1,000 gals]

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  - Application Rate of Test Effluent: 2.0 gpd/sq.ft.; 5,020 gpd for 119 days.
- Down-gradient groundwater quality, depth: sampled from MW-BH-3,  
located 35 ft. downgradient.
  - Up-gradient groundwater [for comparison]: MW-BH-2,  
located 180 ft. upgradient.

## PILOT TEST DETAILS:

Drip dispersal field: 235 ft. x 11 ft., 4 dispersal pipes;  
application area: 2,515 sq.ft.



# PILOT TEST, DRIP DISPERSAL FIELD:





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## PILOT TEST, DRIP DISPERSAL FIELD:



*Perc-Rite® Drip Dispersal System, distributed by Oakson,  
from American Manufacturing:*

- *0.5-in. diameter*
- *Emitters located every 2 ft.*
- *Emitter discharge rate: 0.61 gal/hour, over wide pressure range.*

# PILOT TEST, DRIP DISPERSAL FIELD:



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# PILOT TEST, DRIP DISPERSAL FIELD:



# PILOT TEST, DRIP DISPERSAL FIELD:





# PILOT TEST: EFFLUENT LAGOON



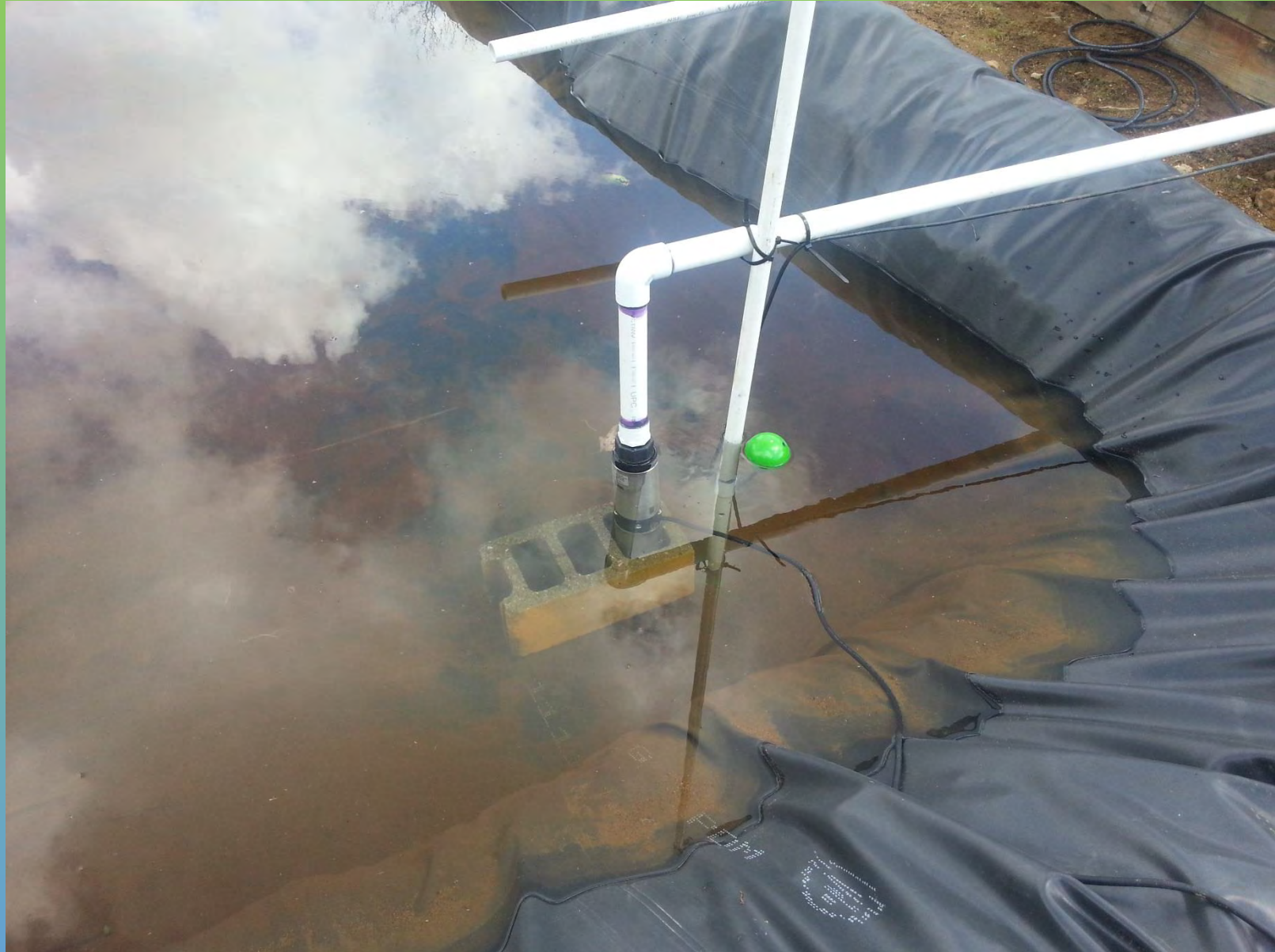
# PILOT TEST; EFFLUENT LAGOON & PUMP



# PILOT TEST; EFFLUENT LAGOON & PUMP



# PILOT TEST; EFFLUENT LAGOON & PUMP



# PILOT TEST; LINE TO DRIP DISPERSAL AREA



# PILOT TEST: TANK OF EFFLUENT BEING UNLOADED



# PILOT TEST: SPIKED EFFLUENT CHEMISTRY

<b>Diluted &amp; Spiked Effluent</b>	<b>Sample Date</b>	BOD (5-Day)  (mg/L)	<b>Br</b>  (mg/L)	Chloride  (mg/L)	<b>NO3</b> as N  (mg/L)	Nitrite as N  (mg/L)	NH3 as N  (mg/L)	TKN  (mg/L)	Total N  (mg/L)	<b>TDP</b>  (mg/L)	TSS  (mg/L)	Sodium  (mg/L)	Cond.  (mS/cm)	pH  (s.u.)
	<b>Mean</b>	3.8	<b>12</b>	74	<b>0.86</b>	< 0.13	1.8	3.86	4.85	<b>1.9</b>	14	38	514	6.89
	<b>Max</b>	5	13	<b>85</b>	1.5	< 0.20	2.4	5.2	6.04	2.1	20	44	568	7.64
	<b>Min</b>	1.7	9.1	<b>62</b>	0.52	< 0.02	1.4	2.5	3.92	1.7	7	33	265	5.81

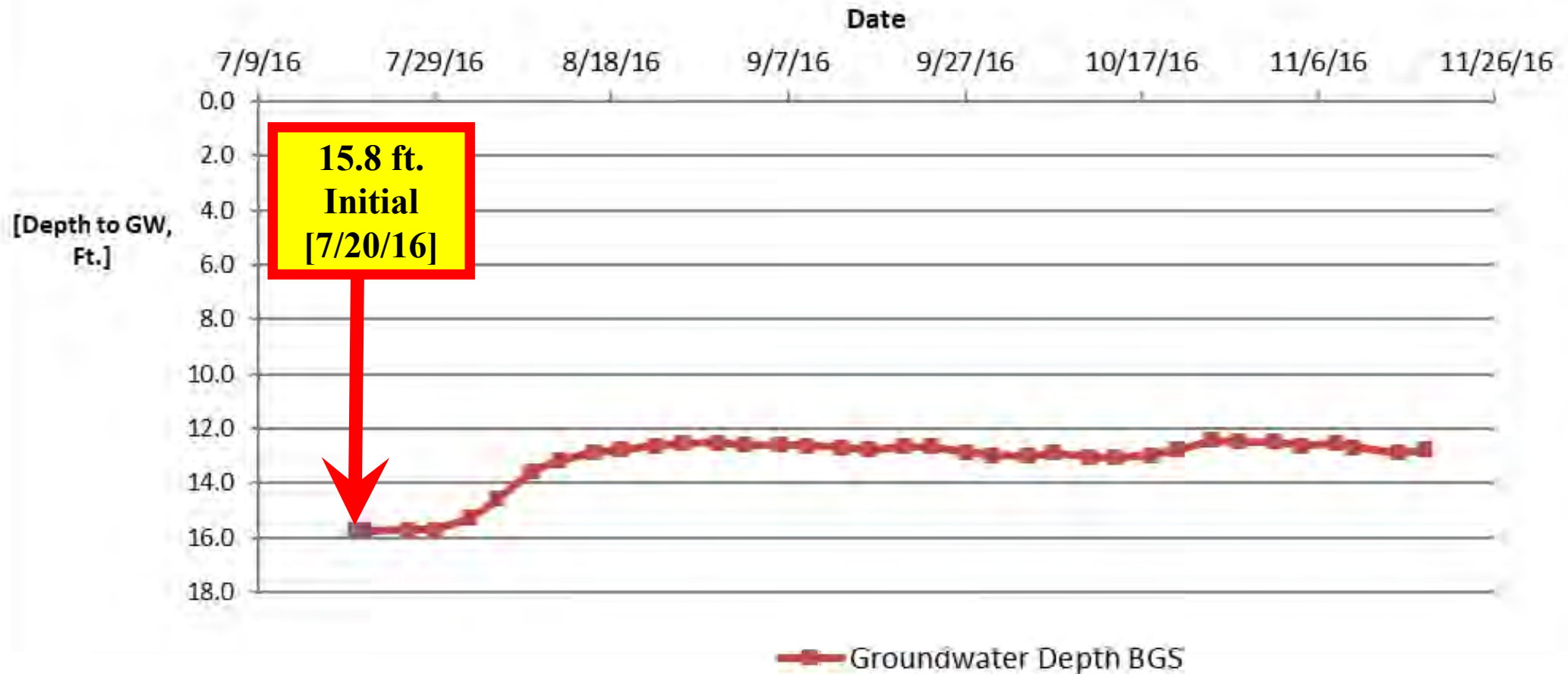
## PILOT TEST, GRAPHS of RESULTS:

- **Downgradient Groundwater Depths;**
  - **Bromide Tracer**
    - **Nitrate**
  - **Total Dissolved Phosphorus**



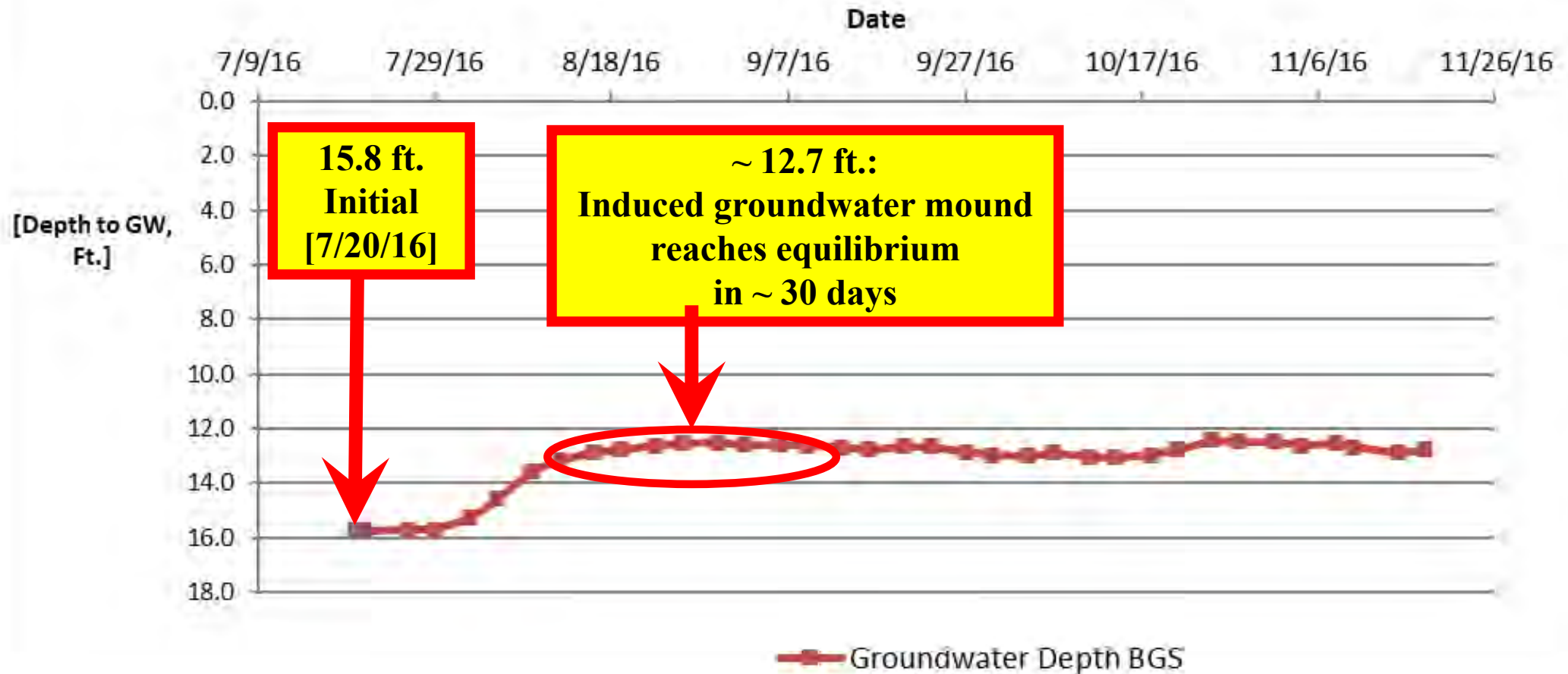
# PILOT TEST: GROUNDWATER DEPTHS, DOWN-GRADIENT

In-Situ Pilot Test, Bromley Best Farm WW Disposal Area  
Groundwater Depth in BH-3 (Downgradient)



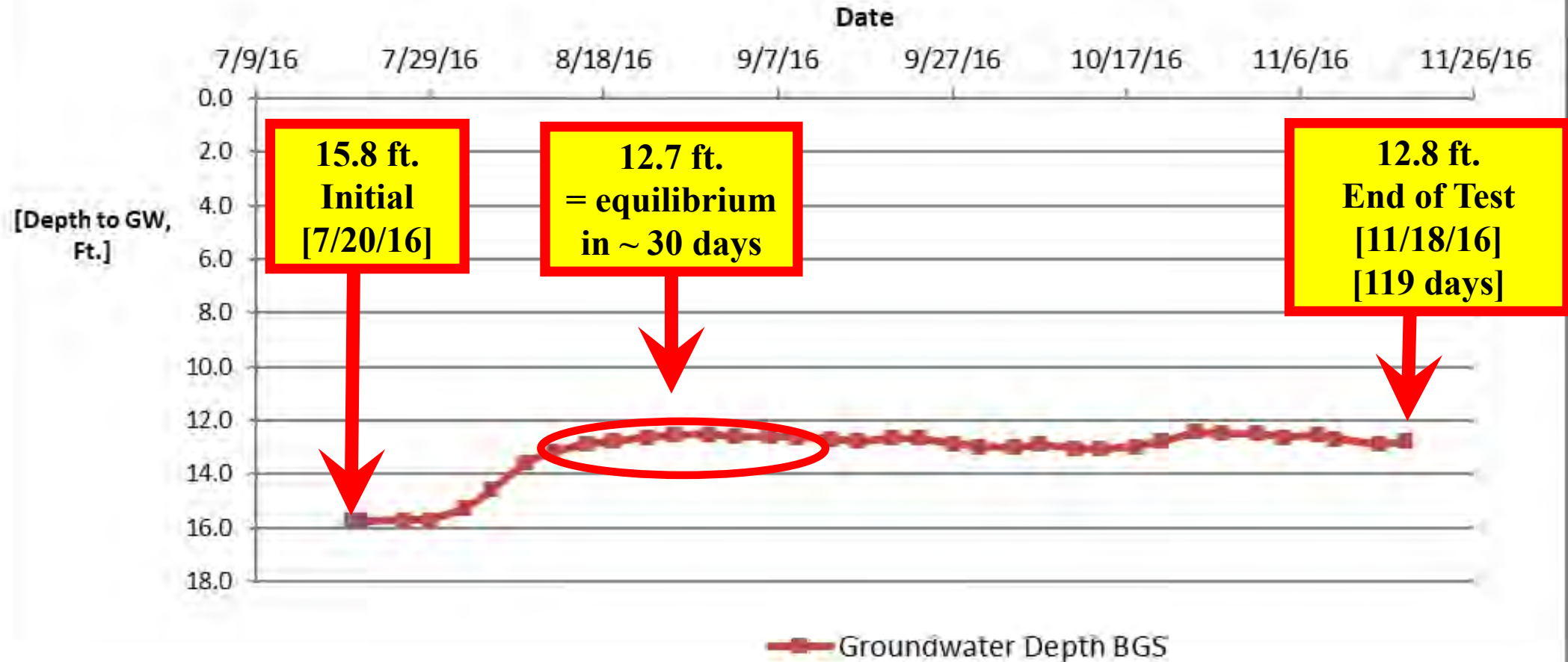
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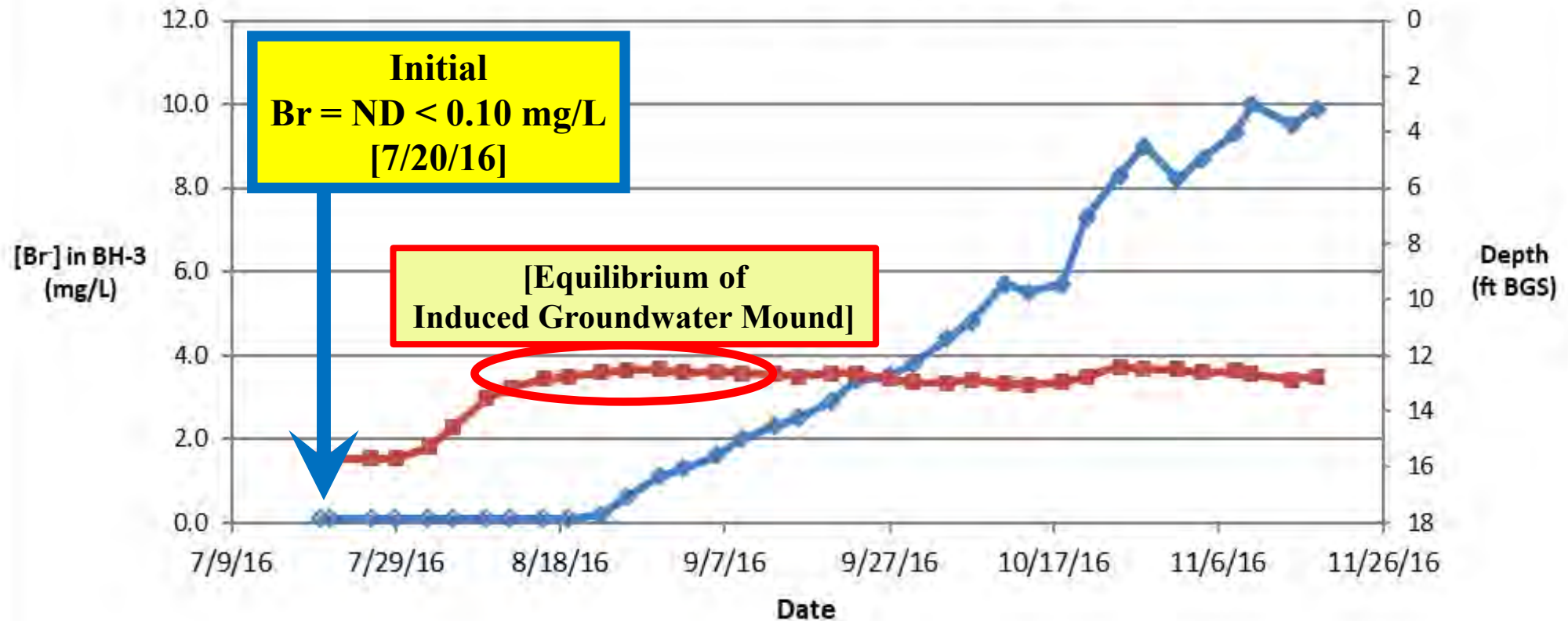
# PILOT TEST: GROUNDWATER DEPTHS, DOWN-GRADIENT

In-Situ Pilot Test, Bromley Best Farm WW Disposal Area  
Groundwater Depth in BH-3 (Downgradient)



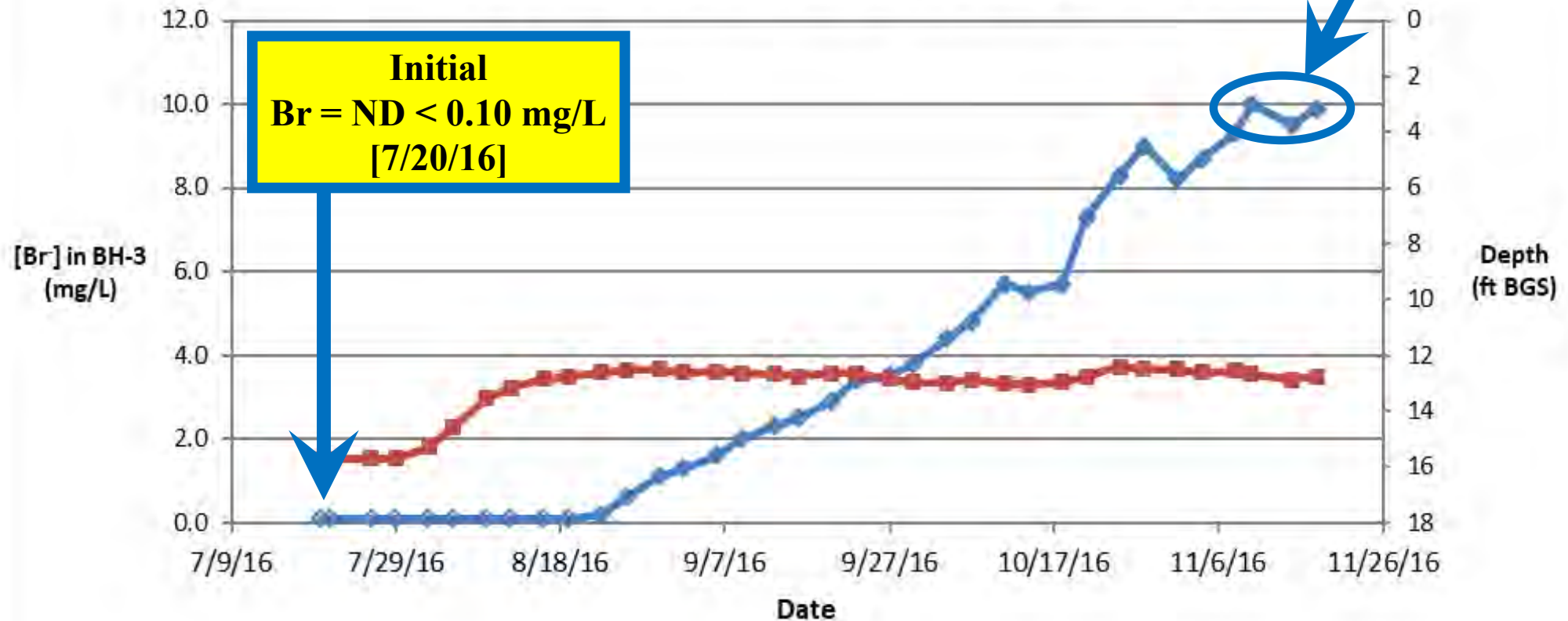
# PILOT TEST: BROMIDE IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER

In-Situ Pilot Test, Bromley Best Farm WW Disposal Area  
Bromide and Groundwater Depth in BH-3 (Downgradient)



# PILOT TEST: BROMIDE IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER

In-Situ Pilot Test, Bromley Best Farm WW Disposal Area  
Bromide and Groundwater Depth in BH-3 (Downgradient)

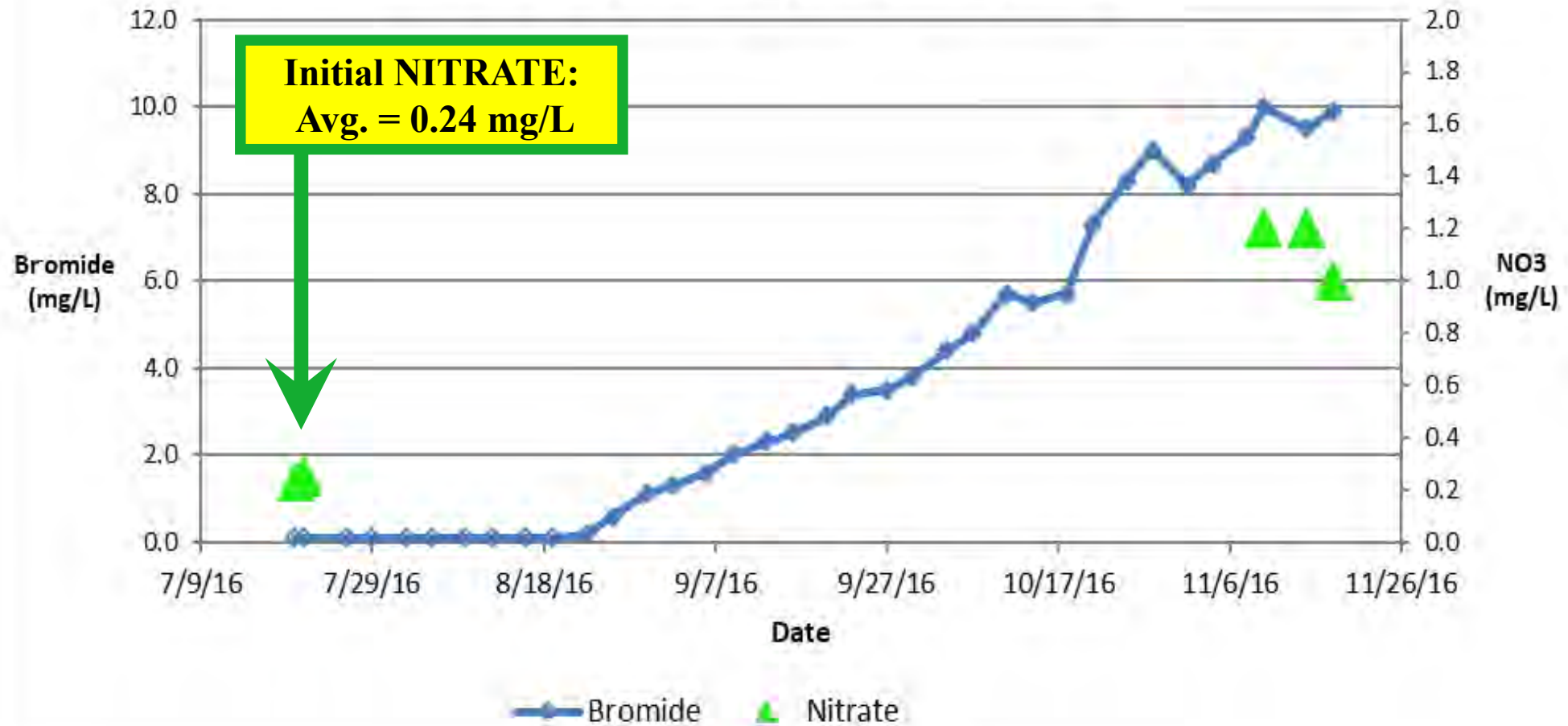


Unfilled Symbol = Non-detected

—◆— Bromide in BH-3

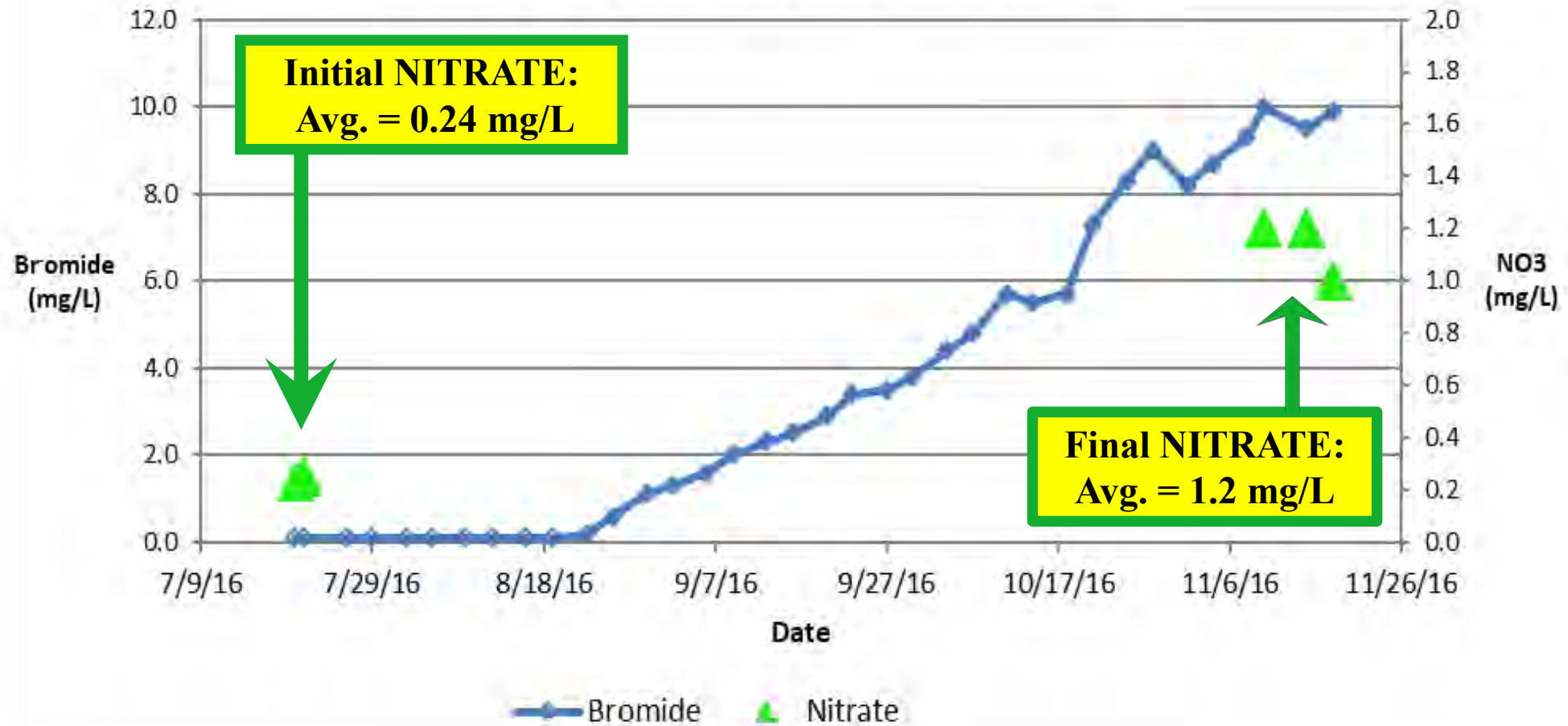
# PILOT TEST: NUTRIENTS IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER: NO3

In-Situ Pilot Test, Bromley Best Farm WW Disposal Area  
Nitrate and Bromide in BH-3 (Downgradient)

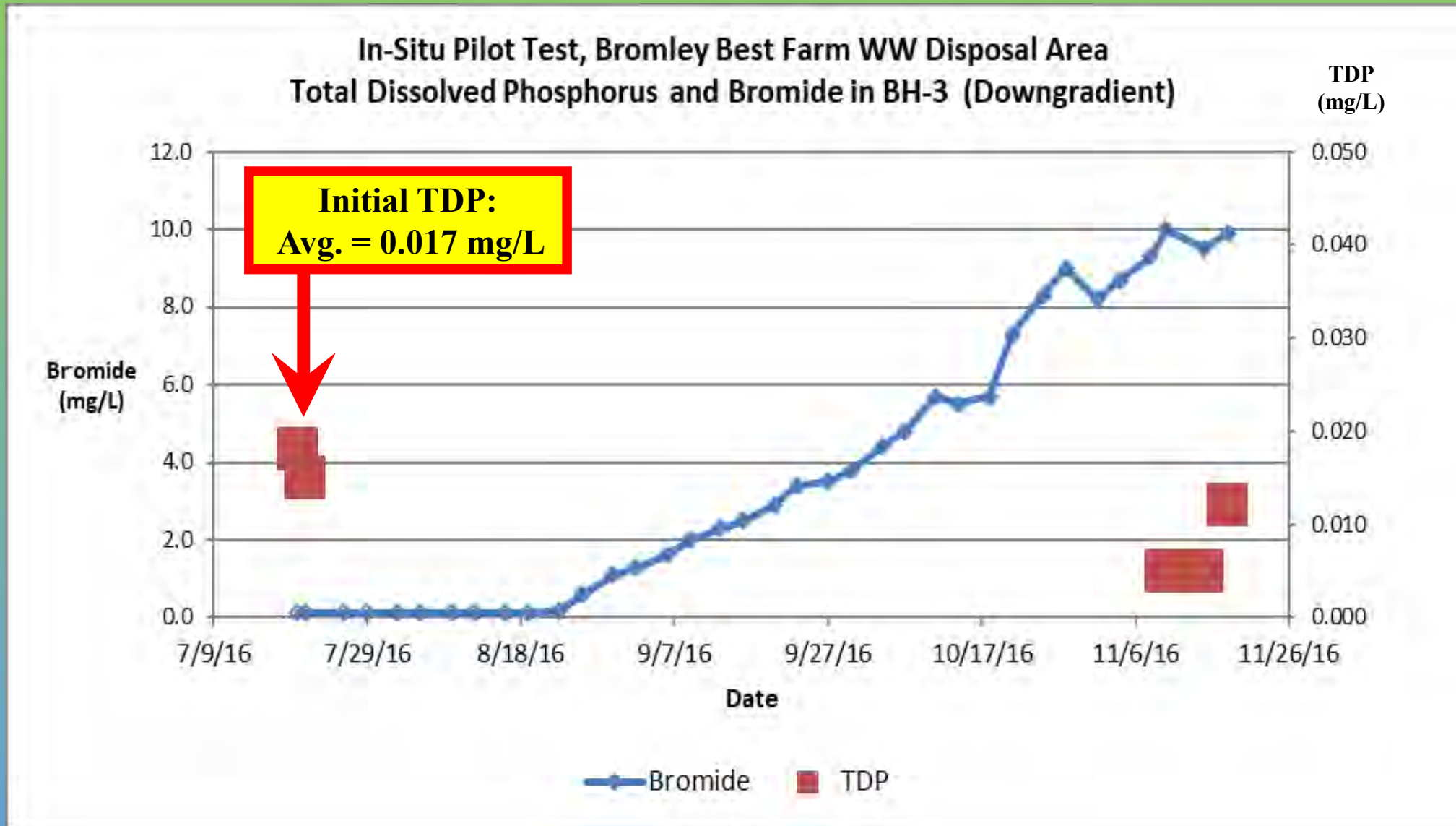


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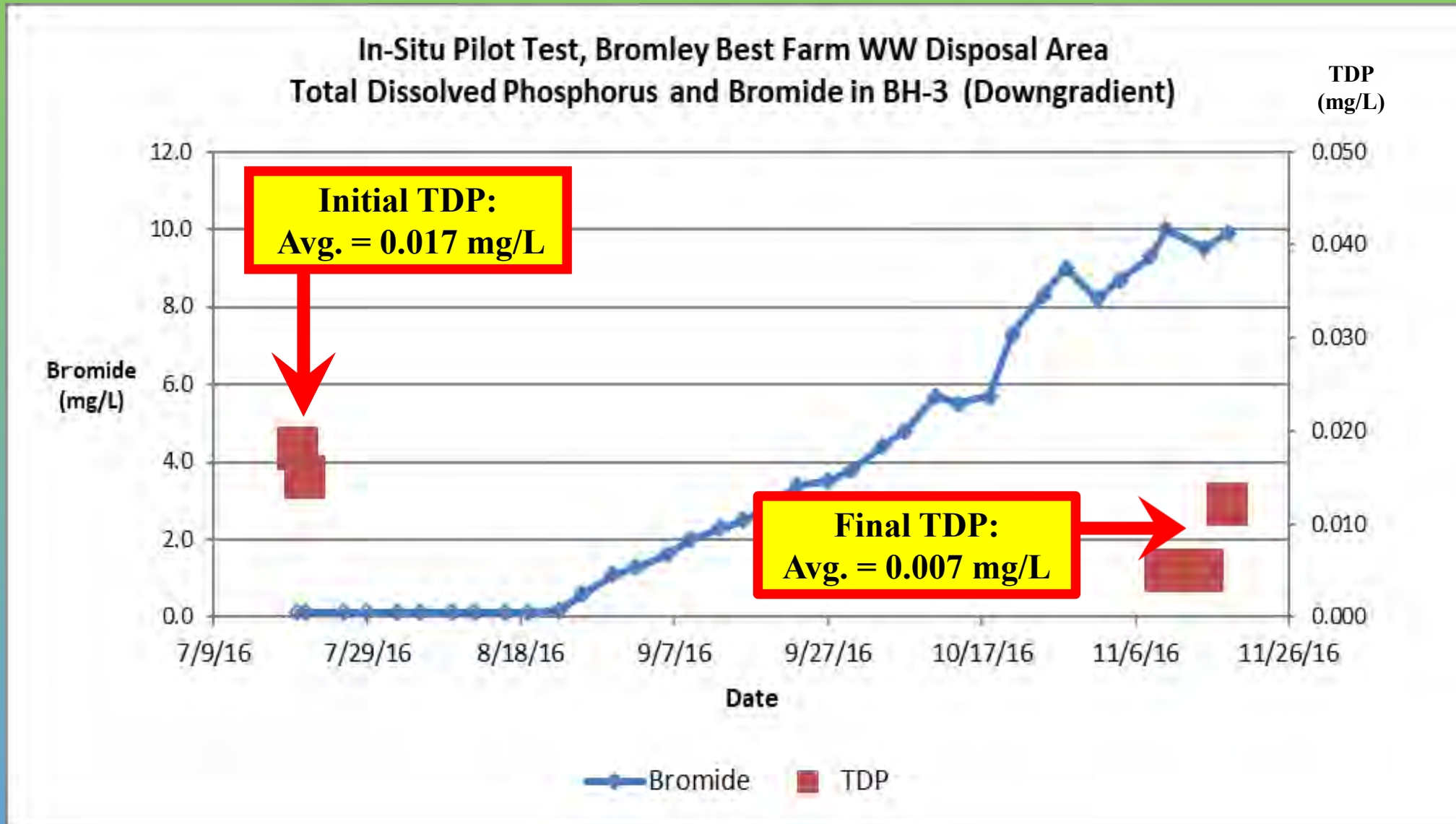


# PILOT TEST: NUTRIENTS IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER: TDP





# PILOT TEST: NUTRIENTS IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER: TDP



# PILOT TEST RESULTS: NUTRIENTS IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER

Sample Date	Bromide	Nitrate as N	TDP	Depth to Water
	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(ft BGS)
7/20/2016	< 0.10	0.23	0.018	15.75
7/21/2016	< 0.10	0.25	0.015	15.73
7/26/2016	< 0.10			15.72
11/8/2016	9.3			12.55
11/10/2016	10.0	1.2	< 0.005	12.69
11/15/2016	9.5	1.2	< 0.005	12.89
11/18/2016	9.9	1.0	0.012	12.76
<b>Mean</b>	3.7			
<b>Max</b>	10.0			
<b>Min</b>	0.1			

**Final:  
8-day  
equilibrium**

**Final NO3:**

**1.20 mg/L**

[max.]

**= 4-fold increase**

**over initial**

[0.24 Mg/L]

**Final TDP:**

**0.007 mg/L [avg.]**

**0.012 mg/L [max.]**

**= decrease**

**from initial**

[0.017 Mg/L]

# BACK TO THE PURPOSE OF THE PILOT STUDY: To predict nutrient impact on Receiving Stream.

## Calculation Method: Mass-balance, at Compliance Point in Eddy Brook:

### §14-912 Determining Compliance With Aquatic Permitting Criteria

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$D_c$  = In-ground effluent concentration (5% exc), based on site specific testing.

$D_q$  = Proposed discharge flow (i.e. maximum design capacity).

**“In-ground  
Effluent”  
Concentration  
[Down-gradient  
Groundwater  
Conc.]**

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[Down-gradient  
Groundwater  
Conc.]

### Final “In-Ground Effluent” [Groundwater] Nutrient Concentrations:

➤ **NO<sub>3</sub>: 1.20 Mg/L;**

➤ **TDP: 0.012 Mg/L.**

## Calculation Method: Mass-balance, at Compliance Point in Eddy Brook:

$$\frac{[(E_c) \times (E_q) + (D_c) \times (D_q)]}{(E_q + D_q)} = \text{Resulting in-stream concentration}$$

- Stream Concentrations [Ec]:  
~ 0.021 Mg/L TDP;                      ~ 0.243 Mg/L NO<sub>3</sub>.
- Streamflow [Eq] = 97,769 gpd [LMMF].
- “In-ground effluent” [Dc]:  
~ 0.012 Mg/L TDP;                      ~ 1.20 Mg/L NO<sub>3</sub>.  
[max. of final 3 values];
- Indirect Discharge Flow [Dq]: 80,000 gpd.

# Mass-Balance Calculations & Results:

<b>INPUT PARAMETERS:</b>				<u>Notes:</u>
<b>Chemical Name:</b>	<b>TDP</b>			<b>Total Dissolved Phosphorus</b>
			units:	
Downgrad. GW Concentration:	0.012	mg/L		Maximum Value of 3 final Samples, Nov. 2016 in-situ pilot test
Upstream SW Concentration:	0.021	mg/L		Upper 95% C.V., from 2014 Eddy Brook Stream Sampling data
IDP Standard:	increase of 0.001	mg/L		per IDRs
Type of Discharge:	Annual			drip dispersal
Stream Name:	Eddy Brook			
LMMF:	97,769	gpd		0.445 mi <sup>2</sup> drainage area * 0.34 csm, converted to gpd
Disposal Rate:	80,000	gpd		
Dilution Ratio at LMMF:	<b>1.22</b>	to 1		
<b>RESULTS:</b>				
Stream Flow Volume at LMMF:	370,056	Liters		conversion [ltrs = gal * 3.785]
Spray Disposal Volume:	302,800	Liters		conversion [ltrs = gal * 3.785]
Mass in Stream:	7,660	mg		conc. X vol.
Mass in Groundwater:	3,634	mg		conc. X vol.
Total Downgradient Mass:	11,294	mg		sum of 2 masses
Total Downgradient Volume:	672,856	Liters		sum of 2 volumes
<b>Predicted Downstream Surface Water Concentration, at LMMF:</b>				
	<b>TDP</b>			
	0.0168	mg/L		[sum of masses] / [sum of vols]
<b>Predicted Increase from Upstream to Downstream:</b>				
	<b>TDP</b>			
	<b>-0.0039</b>	mg/L		<b>OK: &lt; 0.001 mg/L increase</b>
	[decrease]			

# Mass-Balance Calculations & Results:

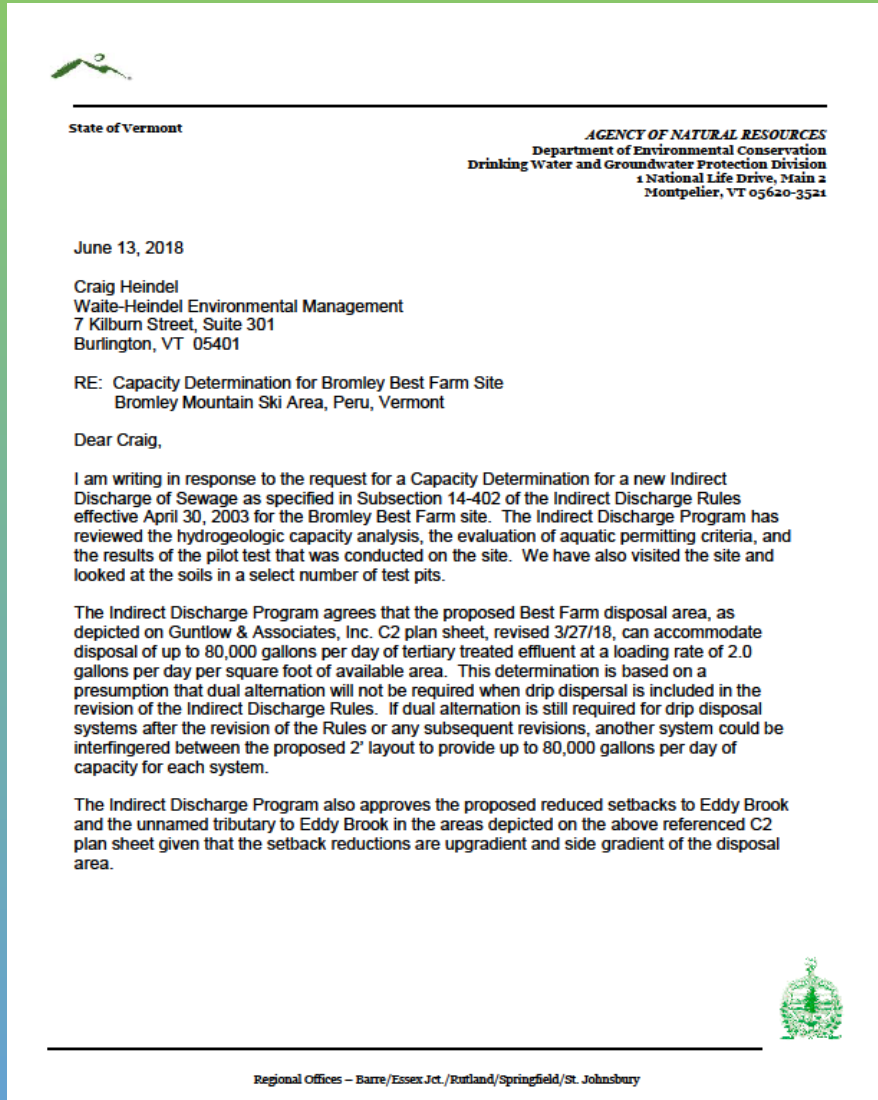
<b>INPUT PARAMETERS:</b>				<u>Notes:</u>
<b>Chemical Name:</b>	<b>NO3</b>			<b>Nitrate</b>
			<u>units:</u>	
Downgrad. GW Concentration:	1.20	mg/L		Maximum Value of 3 final Samples, Nov. 2016 in-situ pilot test
Upstream SW Concentration:	0.243	mg/L		Upper 95% C.V., from 2014 Eddy Brook Stream Sampling data
IDP Standard:	2.0	mg/L		per IDRs
Type of Discharge:	Annual			drip dispersal
Stream Name:	Eddy Brook			
LMMF:	97,769	gpd		0.445 mi <sup>2</sup> drainage area * 0.34 csm, converted to gpd
Disposal Rate:	80,000	gpd		
Dilution Ratio at LMMF:	<b>1.22</b>	to 1		
<b>RESULTS:</b>				
Stream Flow Volume at LMMF:	370,056	Liters		conversion [ltrs = gal * 3.785]
Spray Disposal Volume:	302,800	Liters		conversion [ltrs = gal * 3.785]
Mass in Stream:	89,887	mg		conc. X vol.
Mass in Groundwater:	363,360	mg		conc. X vol.
Total Downgradient Mass:	453,247	mg		sum of 2 masses
Total Downgradient Volume:	672,856	Liters		sum of 2 volumes
<b>Predicted Downstream Surface Water Concentration, at LMMF:</b>				
	<b>NO3</b>			
	<b>0.674</b>	mg/L		[sum of masses] / [sum of vols]
				<b>OK: &lt; 2.0 mg/L.</b>
<b>Predicted Increase from Upstream to Downstream:</b>				
	<b>NO3</b>			
	<b>0.431</b>	mg/L		

# Mass-Balance Calculations & Results:

Predicted Downstream Surface Water Concentrations:						
			NO3:	0.674	mg/L	OK: < 2.0 mg/L.
			TDP:	0.0168	mg/L	
Predicted Increases from Upstream to Downstream:						
			NO3:	0.431	mg/L	OK: < 0.001 mg/L increase
			TDP:	-0.0039	mg/L	



## Capacity Determination Letter” issued 6/13/2018



**“... the proposed disposal area ...  
can accommodate disposal of  
up to 80,000 gallons per day of  
tertiary treated effluent at a  
loading rate of  
2.0 gallons per day  
per square foot ...”**

# **Pilot Test of Nutrient Removal by Large-Scale Drip Dispersal of Tertiary-Treated Effluent, Southern Vermont**

## **SUMMARY:**

- 1. 5,020 GPD of treated domestic WW effluent were applied to a pilot drip-dispersal field for 119 days in July through November 2016;**
- 2. The pilot-test drip-dispersal field was 235 ft. x 10.7 ft. [2,515 sq.ft.]. Diluted secondary-treated wastewater spiked with Sodium Bromide as a tracer was applied at 2.0 gpd/sq.ft. via frequent small-volume timed doses;**

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- 3. Soils at the drip-dispersal pipe depth [6” – 12”] are sandy loams; underlying parent material is fine-to-medium sands, with occasional lenses of gravelly coarse sand; substantial depths to groundwater.**

# Pilot Test of Nutrient Removal by Large-Scale Drip Dispersal of Tertiary-Treated Effluent, Southern Vermont

## SUMMARY [cont.]:

4. Total Dissolved Phosphorus and Nitrate were analyzed in samples collected from downgradient groundwater and effluent.

## Results of Pilot Test:

		Down-Gradient Groundwater	
	Effluent	Pre-Test	End of Test
Parameter:	Mg/L	Mg/L	Mg/L
TDP	1.9	0.017	0.012
NO3	0.86	0.24	1.2

# **Pilot Test of Nutrient Removal by Large-Scale Drip Dispersal of Tertiary-Treated Effluent, Southern Vermont**

## **SUMMARY [cont.]**

- 5. The water table beneath the disposal field was initially at ~ 15 ft. below the drip-dispersal pipes. In response to the pilot test, groundwater rose by 2.9 ft. after ~ 30 days, then remained stable. So ~ 12 ft. of unsaturated soil was maintained below the drip-dispersal field for the final 80 days of the test.**

# **Pilot Test of Nutrient Removal by Large-Scale Drip Dispersal of Tertiary-Treated Effluent, Southern Vermont**

## **SUMMARY [cont.]**

- 6. The combination of drip-dispersal system with frequent small-volume timed doses of treated wastewater, plus sandy loam B-horizon and fine-to-medium sands below, plus deep unsaturated zone [12 to 15 ft.] provided more than 99% removal of Total Dissolved Phosphorus, and substantial conversion of Nitrogen to Nitrate.**

# **Pilot Test of Nutrient Removal by Large-Scale Drip Dispersal of Tertiary-Treated Effluent, Southern Vermont**

**Special thanks to the team members  
who participated in conducting this pilot test:**

- **Bill Beideman, Phil Talbot, Pat Gordon – Bromley WWTP Operators;**
- **Bill Cairns, Michael Van Eyck – Bromley Ski Area management;**
- **Rob Sarmanian, Don Ottenheimer -- Oakson; Gloucester, MA;**
- **Vince Guntlow, P.E.; Guntlow & Associates, Williamstown, MA;**
- **Endyne Laboratories, Williston, VT; Lebanon, N.H.; Plattsburgh, N.Y.**

**2019 NEIWPCC  
Onsite Short Course**



# Pilot Test of Nutrient Removal by Large-Scale Drip Dispersal of Tertiary-Treated Effluent, Southern Vermont

## Questions?

THANK YOU.

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**Extra Slides:  
Data Table of  
Nutrient Concentrations  
In Downgradient Groundwater**



## PILOT TEST: NUTRIENTS IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER

Sample Date	Bromide	Nitrate as N	TDP	Depth to Water
	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(ft BGS)
7/20/2016	< 0.10	0.23	0.018	15.75
7/21/2016	< 0.10	0.25	0.015	15.73
7/26/2016	< 0.10			15.72
11/8/2016	9.3			12.55
11/10/2016	10.0	1.2	< 0.005	12.69
11/15/2016	9.5	1.2	< 0.005	12.89
11/18/2016	9.9	1.0	0.012	12.76
<b>Mean</b>	3.7	0.8	0.011	13.22
<b>Max</b>	10.0	1.2	0.018	15.75
<b>Min</b>	0.1	0.2	0.005	12.43

**Initial**

## PILOT TEST: NUTRIENTS IN DOWN-GRADIENT GROUNDWATER

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**Final:  
8-day  
equilibrium**